



## **TIPS FOR COPING AS A COUPLE**

- **Your marital relationship is a most important relationship. Let it take precedence over all others**
- **Everyone grieves in unique ways. Each of you has different needs and ways of expressing emotions. Work on learning to accept your spouse/partner's expressions of grief, especially when they are different from yours!**
- **Each of us grieves alone, but you do not have to be alone as you grieve**
- **Your spouse/partner does not have to be your sole support system**
- **Difficulties occur even in the best of relationships. Your relationship does not have to collapse because your child died. It will be shaken to its very core.**
- **We are not mind readers! Work at communicating your needs emotionally, physically, mentally and spiritually.**
- **Grief often causes difficulties with sexual intimacy. Be patient. Be forgiving. Be honest and open with your feelings and needs. Remember that touch and hugs can be healing, even when intimacy is not possible.**
- **Each of you needs some privacy. Respect each other's needs and feelings. Give the space needed. Having some "private" time may enhance the "together" times.**
- **Each of you is a different person now. Be patient with each other as you learn who you are and who your spouse/partner is now. You are not strangers to each other, although it may feel that way. Remember the bond of love that bound you together in the first place.**
- **As you each search for meaning in your loss, one may turn to faith, one may not**
- **Sharing your progress as well as your pain helps heal a relationship**

- **It is OKAY to enjoy life once again. You may not heal on the same time schedule, so do not interpret laughter or the return of some joy as "getting over it" or as "not caring". Enjoy the brief moments of respite that joy brings.**
- **You may each choose different things to remember and to save. Work at being respectful and accepting of each other's choices.**
- **Sharing your progress as well as your pain helps heal a relationship.**
- **Cherish your differences, rather than use them as weapons.**



**May love be what you remember the most!**